

DEAD WAITE

The original Waite Smith deck is so popular and has been talked about so exhaustively in print and online media that we felt it would be more appropriate to focus on the visuals found in the Dead Waite For this printable PDF.

MAJORS



The Fool : A bloodied figure holds a white lily, the symbol of death. As the path below him crumbles, his undead companion barks his bloody, rancid breath into the noontime air, a warning that this fool is in danger of dropping off out of existence.



The Magician : The Magician, usually known for keeping a few things to himself, has no place to hide; he's literally spewing his guts for all the world to see. In the foreground both roses and lilies slowly die. What exactly is inside that Cup? Don't ask!



The High Priestess. Another beauty! She's sitting on her throne, and by the looks of the muscles deteriorating on her legs, she'll be there for some time! Her guts pour out from her cavernous ribcage over a mysterious, ancient scroll. If you've ever poured your heart out over a heartfelt letter, or put your blood sweat and tears into a project, you might know the feeling.



The Empress: Morbid and not for the faint of heart, this is one of the more horrible cards but a zombie apocalypse is no walk in the park. Amidst the collapsed wheat, a stream of blood drips from the card. There's a strange irony in that the Empress represents life, yet she has (almost) given birth to an undead young one. Reminiscent of that scene in Alien where an alien rips through people's chests, a little arm peeks from the womb (or should that be tomb?)



The Emperor: A bearded man of power sits on a crumbling throne. It reminds me of the Nine Inch Nails song "Hurt", specifically the line "my empire of dirt". In this card The Emperor still reigns, but only in his own fading consciousness, like a once powerful father that has become weak. Maybe someone needs to whisper in his ear that it's time to put the sceptre down...except that someone's bitten it off.



The Hierophant: Haven't you heard? The zombie apocalypse is no respecter of persons. Even the church is infected. During the first stage of the virus, the faithful will have flocked to church, hoping for answers, fervent in prayer. Be ye peasant or be ye pope, the zombie virus cares not!

MAJORS



The Lovers: Rotten apples lie at the tree of forbidden knowledge, while the granted knowledge (The burning bush) still burns brightly. The Angel, not being in a physical body, remains unaffected by the virus. The lovers below still recognise their love for each other as the dim light of their eyes fades. Soon they will unknow each other.



The Chariot: The city is in flames. A charioteer stares ahead, his lower jaw and tongue lost somewhere in time. Does he move left, or move right? Will his sickly sphinxes even respond to his will? Come to think of it, one of the wheels has fallen off the chariot. Unless it is fixed, he will be going around in circles.



Strength: An undead lion, looking a bit worse for wear, kneels a little under the palm of an undead lady who fancies herself as a bit of a lion tamer. His face covered in blood, the lion has just previously eaten an unsuspecting victim.



The Hermit: Judging by the brightness of the lamp, there's still enough fuel to light his way for a little while, which means the hermit is a very recent addition to the ranks of the undead. A source of wisdom and mystical knowledge, this figure's brilliant mind will, like the great library of Alexandria, fall away into nothingness.



Wheel of Fortune: Yeah right, Wheel of Misfortune you mean! Actually, not so. Yes, the virus has affected the wonderful world of Waite, but beyond the ravaged post-apocalyptic world there is still hope. As a zombie hoard shuffles along in formation in the background, in the foreground we see the spiritual world is very much alive; the cog wheels of existence are always turning, every second of every minute of every hour. Like the angel in The Lovers card, the spiritual beings are physically unaffected by the zombie virus.



Justice: Is there justice to be had in the wasteland? Let's hope so. An undead figure dressed in judicial garb holds scales representing weighing of evidence when examining and judging a case in court. The sword represents the idea that justice can be very swift and final.



The Hanged Man: What a way do die! Hung out to dry, this zombie has been completely stripped of his innards by carrion birds. However what this zombie lacks in guts, he more than makes up for in physical endurance; his spine appears to be as strong as steel. Talk about hangin tough!

MAJORS



Death. Essentially this card is the “Genesis” card of the deck; we go back to where it all began. A king has become lunch under the feet of a sickly pale horse, a royal feast as it were. A bishop of the church pleads with the diseased horseman, looking into the very eyes of death itself for some small morsel of mercy. None is given. The green air indicates the virus may be airborne in nature. If you want to be hopeful with this card, tell the client there’s a sunrise in the background. That’s about it!



Temperance: The problem with zombies is that they cause more trouble than just biting people and making a buffet of your vitals, their blood can also contaminate streams and rivers and other water sources. In this scenario, we see dead fish near the opening of a stream. A horde of zombies fail to notice the spiritual being in the foreground. With two cups in hand, liquids are being mixed. Perhaps a cure is being sought?



The Devil: Like the two zombies in the Lovers card the figures in the Devil card stand looking at each other, only this time they’ve grown animalistic tails (a return to their animal nature). The woman’s tail has a cluster of grapes, the man’s tail (base nature) is set on fire by the Devil. They are prisoners of the fallen nature.



The Tower : Nowhere to go but down. The doors of the tower have been breached. The human occupants flee for their lives, hoping to escape with their essentials. They have no option but to leap out the window and hope for the best. Let’s face it, they’re zombie food. The best case scenario is that they can rebuild again IF they can somehow, miraculously, escape that horde of insanity and teeth below.



The Star: A bit of a tranquil card, or at least the best that could be hoped for in a deck like this. A woman barely hanging together pours blood into a pond and onto the land. Don’t ask why, just leave her be!



The Moon: Under the moonlight a wolf and a dog take down a zombie and in the process spill his guts into a river. Two more zombies come to shore. In the far distance, a horde of zombies pass by, almost unnoticed in the darkness of night. Even the moon feels ill!



The Sun: Remember what we said in the Hierophant that the zombie virus is not a respecter of persons. Here is a prime example. A not so happy kid on a horse is feeling a bit under the weather. The red eyes of the sun almost suggest he’s been pulling an all nighter.

MAJORS



Judgement: It was always difficult to create an entire deck based on death, without taking away from the original death type scenes. Just like the Death card, Judgement deals with a bit of a morbid scene (though originally meant as a blessing of course). The angel blows a trumpet and the dead (undead?) rise from their graves. It gets confusing!



The World: A crow has found its prize. A nice bouncy eyeball that it will take back to its nest and devour in the comfort of its own home. Tasty!

CUPS



Ace of Cups : A hand appears from a cloud with a cup of blood. A dove attempts to dip a Eucharist into the cup, but, alas, the bird's wing is broken. In the distance a zombie seems to be emerging from the lake of blood...all rather lovely!



2 of Cups: 2 lovers exchange cups, an expression of their love, except...the man's cup, and his arm, have fallen to the floor. Nonetheless he reaches for her cup. (The bloody cheek of it!) She doesn't seem to mind too much. She probably forgets who he is in the first place.



3 of Cups: 3 almost undead-ish women have a party and, well, judging by their good cheer, they're having one last drunken blowout before they fully turn!



4 of Cups: Could it be? A cure? From the Temperance angel that was described earlier? Maybe, but it seems lost on this zombie.



5 of Cups: A lone zombie mourns the loss of some of his "special" beverage. As the old saying goes "there's plenty more fish in the sea", but in this case "there's plenty more blood in those people who are hiding in the castles". The glass can always be half full if you will it to be.



6 of Cups: A return to innocence. Sometimes all one can do when they lose themselves, is to go back to a good memory. Even if the flowers don't seem as bright as they used to be, and the soil has lost most of its soul, reliving a good memory is a cure for many an ailment.

CUPS



7 of Cups - This is what sane rational desires look like when insanity has taken captive of one's meat computer. A regular brain might wish for luxuries. A zombie's nutty noggin, on the other hand, desires a lot of crazy stuff, mainly all food related for whatever reason.



8 of Cups: A lone survivor wanders inland, away from the shore. This man has seen enough to last him a lifetime. What kind of bloody carnage lies beyond the card, we don't need to know. Suffice to say, it's not pretty.



9 of Cups: A wish comes true. What poor soul had to lose a leg to fulfil this sick fantasy we'll never know?



10 of Cups: What a disaster! What would have been a happy home in some half decent setting now burns in the distance. The zombie children devour a rat as though it were candy. An undead man tries to keep his wife from falling to the ground. Imagine your dreams almost coming true...almost, but leaving some nasty bitter aftertaste. Hey, you weren't expecting a happily ever after style ending during a zombie apocalypse were you?



Page of Cups: A dead fish peers from a cup, its dead lifeless eyes staring blankly at this death ridden man. The zombie stares at the fish, almost with a child like innocence. He's completely oblivious to the hip bone protruding from his right leg, and the cold wind whistling through his rib cage.



Knight of Cups : A badly eaten horse stops beside a clean crystal blue river. On top, a zombified knight sits with a cup in hand.



Queen of Cups : Covered in barnacles from the sea, this Queen seeks out her reflection on the side of her cup. Unlike most of the zombies in the world of Dead Waite, she still has some "awareness". She knows she is transforming day by day. The bloody sores on her legs and arms, pecked raw by the crows whose keen sense of smell in regard to death, have bothered her now for days. Maggots have even shown their ugly head. The sound of the crashing sea waves gives her small comfort, but it is better than nothing.



The King of Cups: Like the Queen, the barnacles of the sea cling to him. His blood filled cup has fallen into his lap, the contents of which roll down his garments. On his little floating platform he is surrounded by piranhas. This zombie's fate more or less lies in being eaten away over an extended period of time.

WANDS



Ace of Wands: A river of blood flows through a sea of green fields. In the distance lies a castle. Lord knows what has become of it. A zombie hand peeks from a cloud brandishing about the only form of life nearby; lush green leaves sprouting from a wand.



2 of Wands: A tatty clothed merchant looks at a shattered globe in his hand. In the distance, something disastrous must have taken place; the shoreline is bathed in blood.



3 of Wands: The dark night sky is lit up just barely with an orange glow from the burning cities on the horizon. A flock of crows fly above, almost hidden by the darkness. In the foreground a merchant, dressed a little worse for wear, waits for the ships to come in; important supplies for small pockets of survivors.



4 of Wands: A once happy snapshot in time, a woman wearing a wreath comes towards you, wanting brains instead of cake. There are no signs of tangible life here, just remnants of what was once a celebration near the castle. The fruit on the trees look like they could be salvageable though!



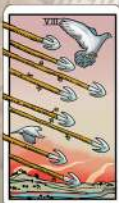
5 of Wands: A few survivors joke around and share a few laughs, almost taunting the zombies before they bash their brains in. It is much debated as to where the game of golf first came into being...but now you know!



6 of Wands: How much victory can one have when one is a shell of his former self? At this point the only gratitude you get is from the deadheads.



7 of Wands: Battered and exhausted but still going strong. Is the figure fighting off zombies who want him for food or fighting off raiders who want his possessions?



8 of Wands: Arrows fly in a volley over a river tainted with blood. Towns in the distance burn against the backdrop of a blood red sky. A carrier pigeon has been sent out to make contact with another castle/community.

WANDS



9 of Wands: A soldier who was once on guard is loyal to his post; a loyalty that has traversed through his transition into a poor undead soul.



10 Wands: Talk about tough! With half of his leg missing, his ribcage and skull exposed to the elements, this zombie will NOT be stopped! He's on a mission and he intends to carry it out...let's hope he remembers the actual purpose behind the mission, rather than just the journey itself.



Page of Wands : A zombie admires his staff. An adventurer, lover of different cultures and points of view. Unfortunately it's all lost on him now. Poor bugger!



Knight of Wands: The horse is badly wounded as is his rider. He's lost his way in the desert and that useless corpse on his back isn't helping matters! As the horse wanders, his eyes go dim. Soon he will wander this ocean of sand, like some weary camel, for what will seem like an eternity.



Queen of Wands : The sunflower in her hand tells you everything you need to know! Even the cat can't be saved from this scenario. Her heart beats in her exposed chest, thump, thump, thump. Her sons, the Page and Knight of Wands are lost to the ravaging winds of the desert, and even if they were to return, she would fail to recognise them.



King of Wands: As the book of Ecclesiastes tells us "all is vanity". Once proud kings of the earth now walk as decaying road kill. All is vanity, including the unrealised dreams of fancy which, had these kings been given, would all amount to nothing in the end anyway. Most of their achievements are lost to the sands of time.

PENTACLES



Ace of Pentacles : White lilies are wilting in the foreground. Flies buzz around a rotting hand that comes from a cloud holding a damaged pentacle.



2 of Pentacles: In the background we see a sea of blood, with survivor ships trying to make their way to a port with their cargo in one piece (see the 3 of Wands). In the foreground a rotting figure juggles two pentacles.

PENTACLES



3 of Pentacles : A craftsman sits down to have his lunch after a decent start to the morning. The city planners call by to see how he's getting on and show him the plans. Well would you look at that...one bloody handprint on a piece of paper? That makes a lot of sense! It's not like these planners are in their right state of mind. The craftsman has proceeded to decorate the hall with bloody hand prints. His other hand, along with his hammer both lay on the ground.



4 of Pentacles : This zombie has developed an obsession with his possessions. Behind him a city, once burning, now smoulders.



5 of Pentacles : The church has been ransacked. Shadowy figures shuffle about in the dim light inside. On closer inspection they are not survivors. Perhaps they were some of the faithful that thought church might be the best refuge. Unfortunately the church, throwing caution to the wind, granted everyone refuge, both the sick, and the healthy. I mean, that's what Jesus would do right? At least they meant well. Now they are all just as dead as everyone else. Perhaps a life lesson can be learned?



6 of Pentacles : A strange spectacle. A wealthy man, yet a man strong in faith, gives "money" to the impoverished. A strange spectacle because the virus has brought down the wealthy to the same level of paupers, but the rich man still believes his money is of value, and the poor still believe they are poor. Their roles are deeply rooted in the subconscious. The philanthropist has come from the ransacked church in the 5 of Pentacles. The wealthy man gives some meat instead of money, reminding us that though he still retains the role of philanthropist, he is clearly not in possession of money, either that or money itself has no real value anymore (That and he's a zombie and not thinking clearly.)



7 of Pentacles : A farmer still sits waiting, tending his crops. Good luck. They're gray, and starting to look a bit lifeless. Maybe he's been watering it with some of that special water found in the Moon and Temperance card.



8 of Pentacles: That moment when you realise a hard working man has lost the plot entirely; A femur for a hammer and a sharpened bone for a chisel. That tells you all you need to know. At least he's dedicated to his work!

PENTACLES



9 of Pentacles : The falcon rests on the lady's hand as she wanders through her garden. Surprisingly the falcon has not flown off. Perhaps its hood has been enough to keep it settled in her presence. She seems to recognise it; remember it almost, and has not considered it as a snack. Behind her a great crop of grapes grow on the vine. They don't seem to have been affected by the changing world.



10 of Pentacles : Happy families! In the streets of a ruined city an old zombified man looks fondly at his dogs, which have brought him a little treat. The dogs are not infected at this point, thank heavens, nor do they appear to shrink from their master. A young boy nearby gets ready to bite into his Big Mac...wait, that's not a...oh, never mind.



Page of Pentacles : A mesmerized zombie looks at a Pentacle he has found. Little does he know, these gold coins will have dropped in value at this point. The good thing about being a zombie, though, is that no matter how impoverished one gets, there will always be food.



Knight of Pentacles : A big Clydesdale horse looks out at a ploughed field. It has probably ploughed this field a few weeks previous. Scabby, rough blotches cover its hide. It's sick but it has not been zombified. The knight, on the other hand, has a once fatal head wound. His ribcage is showing, and he has a wounded leg. What's going through that mind of his? Is he lamenting the devaluation of his gold coin?



Queen of Pentacles : This queen sits in nature, admiring her slightly disfigured coin. A zombie rabbit sits nearby. She seems to be at peace, even though the horrible dystopian nightmare has taken its toll on her body.



King of Pentacles : While this king has been badly damaged, and he has more or less become a complete zombie, he roars his displeasure at the fall of his kingdom. He remembers, somewhat vaguely it must be said, a time when he was seen as an authority. His will was carried out by entire armies, and he was full of wealth and power. Had his old dusty tear ducts any vitality left, he might even shed a tear, lamenting the loss of his glory days.

SWORDS



Ace of Swords: A rotting hand peers from the clouds holding a very battered, time ravaged sword. A wasteland lies below.



2 of Swords : This card puts a whole new spin on someone asking if they can "pick your brains". The woman's blindfold has dropped from her eyes, and her arm has fallen away from her body.

SWORDS



3 of Swords : 3 swords pierce a pulsating, zombified heart.



4 of Swords: While this scene appears to depict permanent rest, as in a zombie being killed, the vital organs being eaten by the crows are not essential to a zombie's "undead" state. In other words, the crows have not killed this zombie by indulging in the intestines. Legend has it that in order to truly do away with a zombie you must destroy its brain.



5 of Swords : Even the undead have their fair share of petty show offs; you know the type. This is a hollow victory. Even if they physically could, the other two don't want to get into a sword fighting contest over something trivial.



6 of Swords : A passage through hell. Let's hope the boat doesn't capsize. Three survivors make their way across an expanse of water, flanked on both sides by zombies.



7 Swords : A thieving zombie really only proves one thing; this guy was a no good rotten thief in his former life. Why else would you be doing something as pointless as stealing swords when you're a bloody zombie? The unconscious is our real captain. Few can understand it, but through repetition and routine people will do the strangest of things. It reminds me of the zombie shoppers going to the supermarket out of mere routine in Romero's Dawn of The Dead



8 of Swords : All wrapped up and no place to go. The sun rises beyond a zombified woman. Perhaps she's been tied up by a few survivors, before they fled the area. Her head has sustained injury and so too has her arm. Had she still retained her human mind, she may have used these swords nearby to cut the ties that bind her.



9 of Swords: A survivor awakes in the middle of the night. Outside he hears the roaring and wailing of a monstrous horde. They scrape their nails along the wooden boards, trying to pry their way in. How can one sleep peacefully with such a threat outside the door? Surely though the window of the room is secure with the wooden beams and swords?

SWORDS



10 of Swords : A figure lies dead on the ground as crows feast on his vitals. Whether this was a zombie or a human man it is not 100 percent clear. His neck, the only flesh revealed, has not turned green. In a zombie apocalypse, one might be forgiven for thinking that such a clear contrast between the living and the dead would unite all survivors, but rarely is anything as ideal as that. There are always opportunists, traitors and scavengers regardless of the feeling of comradery in such situations. It is anyone's guess how 10 swords came to be lodged in his body; from his legs all the way up to his neck, but regardless of what happened, someone really wanted him dead!



Page of Swords: While this zombie is more or less a goner, he still retains some memory of a previous life where he was practicing his sword fighting skills. He will soon discard the blade, relying instead on his row of sharp teeth to carve out a life for himself as a raging, decaying, psychopath. I mean, wouldn't you?



Knight of Swords: Charge!!! Though this horse has been through the war, it has not been infected by the virus, allowing it to gallop as quickly as regular horses. It could be argued it is trying to flee the rider.



Queen of Swords : The queen holds her hand in the air, the muscles and sinew hanging from the bones. For a second she thinks she sees a butterfly landing on her fingers, but there is nothing there. Though her sword has dulled some and her once majestic butterfly crown is barely hanging together, she sits as queen. In her mind, life has not changed. She is still the queen of her realm.



King of Swords : There is little that remains within the cavern of this poor soul's chest. Over time the crows have picked his stomach apart like it were a piñata. Someone or something has hewn his forearm right from his body.



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EXTRAS



The Scavenger : During such trying times when society has broken down and everyone seems to have gone crazy, it is good to have a stockpile of food and amenities that you can rely on until you can become accustomed to the new world. Not everyone will be so fortunate. As panic sweeps through the towns and cities, of a fear of running out of supplies, you too will have to decide what to grab, and what to leave behind, and the importance of wasting nothing. This card indicates that someone is not only resourceful, but is open to the many many opportunities in the environment around them. I see it more as someone picking over something that's already been picked over yet making use of things that others have deemed scrap, rather than pilfering something of immediate and noticeable value. (the kind of things that would go missing from the shelf from the first wave of raiders). A scavenger will also have a much keener eye, picking up things that others may have missed.



Communication : Contact with the outside world is vital to form a wider community and a network of reliable contacts. In this medieval zombie setting, being fiercely independent can be a good thing, but condemning yourself to isolation has it's limitations. In the card, an apocalyptic postal worker (not Kevin Costner lol) delivers a letter from one Kingdom to the other.

Similarly in our 8 of Wands card, carrier pigeons fly alongside arrows, carrying a message attached to their leg. In the old days, long before telephone, it was a great way of getting a message to someone from a distance.



Survivor : You're a survivor and at least one small part of you probably loves the thrill of the battle on top of it all. You're holding up that zombie head like a trophy. Hell, you probably sew up your own wounds too without as much as a grimace. Ok, that might be going a bit far!

A survivor indicates that you're willing to rough it and endure things that would break most other people under the pressure.

This could also indicate you have survived divorce, ill health, severe emotional trauma and lived to tell the tale. There is quite a lot of truth to the saying "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger". You are battle hardened. Occasionally some may say they wished to see a softer side to you, which is fair. Depending on the person, it might be good to show this side of you, but never resent your survivalist mentality. It has probably saved your life a few times.

EXTRAS



The Lookout : Every decent fort needs one. Without a lookout, you will not see danger ahead of you, and so you will have to think quickly when things go wrong, (Which life tends to do, just to keep us on our toes). This card is based on the Belvedere card from the Sibilla oracle deck.

In a reading setting, or more practical setting in your own life, I also see this card as representing possibly a “wing man”, or someone who has got your back. It can also mean you need to be cautious (especially if you really don’t have anyone looking out for you).



Infected : Many people see the idea of Death as transition. What's more of a transition than passing over into the world of the zombie. Perhaps a better explanation is that feeling one might get when they are still consciously "with it", but "know" that people need to keep away from them for their own safety. One might actively volunteer being quarantined for the greater good, especially if they have children. This noble, voluntary act is probably much more likely to happen when nearing the last stages of transition, where one might start “seeing” things that no one else sees, or having intense feelings of hate and rage; sure signs that something is going on upstairs that might need to be taken seriously!

Thankfully with the help of the medical world, most infections can be treated in our society, but some cannot. In a zombie setting, one might find it very useful to seek out a local pharmacy or hospital for supplies for certain ailments. Actual zombie bites, unless there is a cure on the near horizon, will probably be fatal.

In a card reading, depending on the question, this card may prove quite interesting. Let’s say the question was “What’s wrong with my computer?”. If you pulled the infected card it would be pretty obvious. However I would caution both reader and client to be careful with medical type readings. If you feel something’s really wrong with you, seek medical advice from a doctor. Don’t be a zombie, use common sense! In such serious readings, these cards should really only be used for entertainment.

